GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:203
ANSWERED ON:29.07.2002
PROJECT ELEPHANT
CHANDRAKANT BHAURAO KHAIRE

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the number of elephants is fast declining due to poaching in the country;

(b) if so, the steps being taken by Government to save the elephant population ;

(c) area-wise number of elephants available in the country where Project Elephant has been implemented;

(d) whether any efforts are being made to increase the elephant population in the country; and

(e) if so, the details thereof ?

Answer

MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU)

(a), (b), (c), (d) & (e) A statement is placed on the table on the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a), (b), (c), (d) & (e) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION No FOR 29.07.02 REGARDING PROJECT ELEPHANT.

(a) No Sir.

(b) to (e) Project Elephant is being implemented in the country with a view to improve the habitat and protect the elephants.

According to the latest estimates, the population of elephants in the States where Project Elephant is being implemented, is as under:

State	Number
Andhra Pradesh	73
Arunachal Pradesh	1607
Assam	5312
Jharkhand	618
Karnataka	6088
Kerala	5737
Meghalaya	1840
Nagaland	147
Orissa	1827
Tamilnadu	2971
Uttaranchal	1507
West Bengal	327

The various measures undertaken for protection of elephant and its habitat are as under:

1. Government of India has identified 25 Elephant Reserves in the country with a view to provide systematic and focussed management of viable elephant ranges. Of these, 10 Elephant Reserves have since been notified by the State Governments.

2. Intensive patrolling is done by the forest staff in sensitive areas. Assistance from the Police is also taken as and when required.

3. The C.B.I. has been empowered under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 to apprehend and prosecute wildlife offenders.

4. The Ministry of Home Affairs has written to all State Governments to lend a helping hand to the field formations of the Forest Departments to curb poaching and illegal trade in wildlife.

5. Prime Minister of India has also written letters to the State Chief Ministers asking them to strengthen the protection mechanism for wild animals.

6. A Special Co-ordination and Enforcement Committee, comprising of representatives from various enforcement agencies of Central Government has been set up under the chairmanship of Secretary, Environment & Forests, Government of India, for overseeing the measures taken to curb poaching and illegal trade in wildlife. Similar co-ordination committees comprising representatives of various enforcement agencies at the state level have been set up.

7. The Forest Departments of Kerala, Tamilnadu and Karnataka have formed a regional co-ordination committee for joint action against inter-State gangs of poachers.

8. Import and export of ivory have been banned.

9. India is a signatory to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES) which prohibits international trade in ivory and other elephant products.

10. For controlling trans-border trade in elephant parts and products, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed with Nepal.